In the Claims

Please delete claims 1-5, 8, 9, 12-22. In deleting these claims from the present application, Applicant neither confirms nor denies the Examiner's rejection of these claims. Applicant reserves the right to file applications based on these claims in the future.

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Claim 6 (Amended) A spinal fluid collection system for use by a medical professional for collecting, from a spinal tap into a plurality of CSF tubes, multiple samples of cerebrospinal fluid from a patient, comprising, in combination,

a) a plurality of CSF tubes structured and arranged to receive, seal, and transport cerebrospinal fluid;

b) at least one spinal tap assembly structured and arranged to tap into the patient to obtain a flow of cerebrospinal fluid; and

c) a holder structured and arranged to stably hold said CSF tubes when said holder is in an upright position;

d) wherein said holder comprises a handle structured and arranged to assist single-hand manipulation of said holder by the medical professional during the collecting of the cerebrospinal fluid directly from said spinal tap into said CSF tubes, when held by said holder, in a continuing manner without the need to grasp any said CSF tube during the collecting; and

e) wherein when said holder is structured and arranged to stably hold when said holder is in an upright position, an element selected from the group consisting of:

a. a spinal needle;

b. a spinal needle sleeve;

c. a spinal needle stylet;

d. a spinal needle sleeve holding a spinal needle;

e. a spinal needle sleeve holding a spinal needle and a stylet;

f) wherein said holder is structured and arranged to stably hold four of the CSF tubes when said holder is in an upright position;

g) wherein said holder is structured and arranged to stably hold, when said holder is in an upright position, at a first portion of said holder an element selected from such group;

h) wherein said holder is structured and arranged to stably hold, when said holder is in an upright position, at a second portion of said holder an element selected from such group.

Claim 23 (New) An open-sided spinal fluid collection system comprising:

a) a test tube rack structured and arranged to support a plurality of test tubes;

b) wherein said test tube rack comprises at least one open side;

c) wherein said test tube rack further comprises at least one needle aperture structured and arranged to support an element selected from a group comprising:

a. a spinal tap needle;

b. a stylet; and

c. a needle sleeve.

Claim 24 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 23 wherein the test tube rack comprises:

a) a top shelf comprising a plurality of test tube apertures to support test tubes;

b) at least one needle aperture to support an element selected from said group; and

c) a bottom shelf.

Claim 25 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 further comprising two side panels and two open sides.

Claim 26 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 wherein the bottom shelf comprises indentations structured and arranged to support test tubes.

Claim 27 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 further comprising a handle shelf.

Claim 28 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 27 wherein said handle shelf comprises a plurality of test tube apertures to support test tubes and at least one needle aperture to support an element selected from said group.

Claim 29 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 further comprising a handle.

Claim 30 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 further comprising an inside shelf.

Claim 31 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 30 wherein said inside shelf comprises a plurality of test tube apertures to support test tubes and at least one needle holder to support an element selected from said group.

Claim 32 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 comprising three test tube apertures to support three test tubes.

Claim 33 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 comprising four test tube apertures to support four test tubes.

Claim 34 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 24 comprising two needle apertures to support two elements selected from said group.

Claim 35 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 23 further comprising a spinal needle and at least one CSF tube.

Claim 36 (New) A spinal fluid collection system comprising:

a) a test tube rack structured and arranged to support a plurality of test tubes comprising a top shelf and a bottom shelf;

b) wherein said test tube rack further comprises two needle apertures;

c) wherein each needle aperture is structured and arranged to support an element selected from a group comprising:

a. a spinal tap needle;

b. a stylet; and

c. a needle sleeve.

Claim 37 (New) An open-sided spinal fluid collection system comprising:

a) a test tube rack structured and arranged to support a plurality of test tubes;

b) wherein said test tube rack comprises at least one open side;

c) wherein said test tube rack further comprises two needle apertures;

d) wherein each of the two needle apertures is structured and arranged to support an element selected from a group comprising:

a. a spinal tap needle;

b. a stylet; and

c. a needle sleeve;

e) wherein the test tube rack further comprises:

a. a top shelf comprising a plurality of test tube apertures to support test tubes; and two needle apertures to support an element selected from said group,

b. a bottom shelf comprising indentations structured and arranged to support test tubes; and

c. a handle.

Claim 38 (New) The open-sided spinal fluid collection system of Claim 37 further comprising a sterilizable container.

Claim 39 (New) A method of using a spinal fluid collection system comprising the steps of:

a) providing an open-sided spinal fluid collection test tube rack comprising a plurality of test tube holders and two needle holders;
b) arranging at least three open test tubes in a test tube holder of the test tube rack;
c) placing a needle sleeve into a first needle holder;
d) inserting a spinal needle containing a stylet between a patient's vertebrae until a tip of the spinal needle reaches a dural space;
e) removing the stylet from the needle;
f) placing the stylet in a second needle holder;
g) holding said test tube rack containing the at least three open test tubes under a proximal end of the needle to catch CSF;
h) determining when an open test tube contains a sufficient amount of CSF;
i) shifting the open-sided spinal fluid collection test tube rack so that CSF drips from the proximal end of the needle into a second open test tube;
j) determining when the second open test tube contains a sufficient amount of CSF;
k) shifting the open-sided spinal fluid collection test tube rack so that CSF drips from the proximal end of the needle into a second open test tube;
l) determining when the second open test tube contains a sufficient amount of CSF;
m) removing the stylet from the needle holder;
n) replacing the stylet inside the needle;
o) removing the needle from the dural space;
p) placing the spinal needle containing the stylet into the needle holder; and
q) closing the at least three open test tubes.

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